

**Press Information Bureau
Government of India
Ministry of Home Affairs**

25-November-2011 18:47 IST

Historic Agreement Signed between Centre, Assam Govt. and UPDS

A tripartite Memorandum of Settlement (MoS) was signed today between the Central Government, Government of Assam and United People's Democratic Solidarity (UPDS) in the presence of Union Home Minister Shri P. Chidambaram and Assam Chief Minister Shri Tarun Gogoi. Calling it a historic moment, the Union Home Minister said that this MoS provides for enhanced autonomy for Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council in Assam and also a special package for speedier socio-economic and educational development of the area for which the Council has been set up. Government has always shown its willingness to enter into dialogue with any group, that is willing to abjure the path of violence and place its demand within the framework of the Constitution of India.

Speaking on the occasion Shri P. Chidambaram said that in the past, violence marked the agitation of the UPDS that was intended to attract the attention of the Government towards the backwardness of the Karbi Anglong District. After realizing futility of the violence, in August 2002, UPDS came forward and expressed its willingness to give up violence and seek solution of its problems peacefully within the framework of the Indian Constitution.

In November 2009, in order to speed up the peace process, Government appointed Shri P.C. Haldar as Interlocutor/Government of India's Representative to negotiate with the UPDS for addressing their grievances. After several round of discussions, negotiating team comprising the Representatives of Government of Assam, Ministry of Home Affairs and UPDS finalized tripartite agreement, which has been signed today.

Shri P. Chidambaram said that negotiations with factions of the DHD are continuing and are near the final stage. Tripartite agreements with them would be signed shortly. The Union Home Minister said talks with ULFA and NDFB/Progressive are also continuing. Recently, we have authorized Shri P.C. Haldar to initiate peace process with NDFB(Ranjan Daimary) Group.

Wishing for a peaceful and developed State of Assam in near future, the Union Home Minister congratulated the people of Assam including Karbi Anglong District, for showing maturity and wisdom and recognizing the importance of peace for overall socio – economic development. He urged all groups to give up violence and come forward to find peaceful solution to all their perceived problems.

The salient features of the MOS are:

(a) Setting up of a committee under Assam Legislative Assembly as envisaged under Article

371B of the Constitution of India;

(b) Renaming of existing Council as Karbi Anglong Autonomous Territorial Council (KAATC);

(c) Increasing seats in the Council upto 50 members of which 6 will be nominated by Governor for more representation (presently 30 seats out of which 4 nominated by Governor). However, proposed increase in seats from existing 26 to 44 elected seats and also nominated seats shall be applicable subsequent election to the Council due in 2016-17 or mid-term poll, if any, whichever is earlier.

(d) Setting up of Village Councils for deepening democratic process at the grass root level

(e) Transfer of additional subjects by the State of Assam to the Council along with legislation and executive powers;

(f) Setting up of State Finance Commission (SFC) and consideration of higher fund allocation to the council to undertake viable activity;

(g) Strict adherence to establish norms of financial management, proper audit of the accounts, etc.

(h) Measures for socio-economic, education, health, and cultural development;

(i) Special economic package of Rs.350 crore (Rs.70 cr. p.a.) over and above the plan fund over the next 5 years to KAATC for identified projects;

(j) Improvement of road connectivity , water supply and supply of power in Karbi Anglong District under existing schemes;

(k) Providing one-time grant for capacity building in KAATC for preparation of DPR etc.

(l) Rehabilitation of UPDS cadres; Withdrawal of cases relating to heinous crimes shall be reviewed case by case according to existing policy for withdrawal of such cases. Implementation of MoS will be reviewed periodically.

Amendments will be made in the relevant paragraphs of the Sixth Schedule for (b) to (f) above and other executive orders will be issued to implement the other provisions of MoS.

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(Release ID :77623)